The
COMMONWEAL

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Dispersed and United

IT MAY HAVE been Maritain but someone said that a time might come when there were Christians all over the world but that they would be separated and that they would be like little fires lighted by lonely men in the desert with miles and miles between each fire and a man standing by any one of them would not see a man standing by another. Christianity which had belonged to nations would belong then in each man's heart and it would only be in God that Christians would unite.

It was easier, it was very beautiful, when there were Christian nations and there were parishes throughout an entire nation and the villages surrounded the village church, with the spire of the church rising above the houses and the fields and pasture lands beyond. It was wonderful because no matter if a man were bad and no matter what sins were all over everywhere—and also no matter what poverty and what epidemics and what wars brought misery to everyone—there was this closeness to the Church, this sense of being safe in the Church, this having the Church so close that when the suffering was too great, the shame too heavy, a man would turn to the everlasting mercy which was always close at hand.

The Christian nations, the churches, the cathedrals, the monasteries, the parishes were arranged so conveniently, so providentially, that everyone felt that he had his home, but that the Church and the nation were also part of that home. Everyone felt that everyone else in the parish and in the nation were of the same family.

It could not last, because little by little people began to feel much more held to the nation than they did to the parish or to the cathedral, and even while it lasted the nations became more and more separated and in each nation the families were separated from the families of another nation. Even while it lasted there would be someone like Joan of Arc who in the deepest distress she had to endure cried out, beyond the parish, beyond the cathedrals of her country, beyond her nation, beyond the English nation, beyond all nations and all boundaries and limits, to the Rome which stood outside all nations.

Even then when there was a Christendom, with so many nations united in a Christendom, there was this great desire, this tremendous insistence that the hearts of all men everywhere should unite in a Church that knew nothing but these hearts, nothing about Germans or French, nothing about the color of men's skins, nothing even about continents, or distance, or language.

Pope Pius naming now all the cardinals from all over the world—the Chinese Cardinal, the North and South American Cardinals—asserts again in his Christmas message the supra-national character of the Church that "diffuses from her own integral and coherent vitality ever new forces to heal and consolidate torn and divided mankind: forces of unifying divine grace, forces of the unifying spirit, for which all hunger, truths which are valid always and everywhere, ideals which are everywhere and always fresh."

Moscow, 1945

THE AGREEMENTS reached by the three Foreign Secretaries at Moscow evoke responses varying with the attitudes of those confronted with them. If you are basically suspicious of Russia and inclined to see in her every act a phase of expansive imperialism, you will naturally come to the conclusion that here was another and a worse Munich. You will go a step further and say that here three imperialisms appeased each other in strict proportion to their vitality and that since the vitality of Russian imperialism is the greatest, it was the most appeased. To form such judgments is easy, and certainly it is equally easy to justify them by reference to the record. Yet to do so is not to be entirely as realistic as one might think. For to do so is to fail entirely in any effort to see ourselves as others see us.

It is so easy for us to forget two tremendous facts which Mr. Molotov certainly cannot forget for an instant. The first is that we have developed both the atomic bomb and the technical capacity

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to produce it—and are producing is at a rate of 500 a year, it would seem. What is more, Mr. Molotov is unlikely to forget President Truman's two declarations which sum up to the terse statement that we intend to "keep it." The second great fact we are also likely to forget, but Mr. Molotov is not. Whatever agreements Mr. Byrnes might subscribe to in Moscow are not agreements at all in any real sense. If Mr. Molotov says that Russia agrees to something, he means precisely that—though his saying so is of course no guarantee that Russian policy will not change. Mr. Bevin is the representative of a responsible majority in the British Parliament which possesses enough unity and solidarity to implement his decisions. Mr. Byrnes represents the sales department of the United States Government which, unfortunately, has no direct relations with the credit department, and anything he subscribes to is juridically worthless until the hawkeyes of the Senate approve it by a two-thirds majority. Since Mr. Molotov is perfectly well aware of this, and realizes that the agreement will be subject to critical scrutiny in our Congress, he naturally will try to make that agreement favorable to him in the expectation that *any* agreement is likely to be whittled down before it becomes binding on the United States. Here are two grounds for suspicion which, were the situation reversed, would surely lead us to deal with Russia in an equally difficult fashion.

Hence the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* admirably stated the optimistic side of the case: "After all, the large degree of agreement, particularly on the overriding atomic issue, creates a hopeful atmosphere after the grimness that followed the London failure and after the controversies with Russia."

Here again the criterion of judgment is one's opinion on two things. Is Russia's primary motive one of self-aggrandizement or one of caution provoked by suspicion and fear? Can one have any confidence that Russian policy will strive to abide by these most recent agreements? The attitude of the *Post-Dispatch* and — necessarily — of Mr. Byrnes is affirmative to the latter. The attitude of those who themselves are deeply suspicious of the Soviet Union is negative.

In detail, and assuming that a serious effort will be made to implement the Moscow decisions, the declaration of policy on China is good and indicates a continued willingness on the part of Russia to let China manage her own affairs. Will it be reflected in the activities of the Chinese Communists? The Korean settlement was obviously a compromise, and one certainly not calculated to please the Koreans, who after their long Japanese servitude can desire only one thing—freedom from external interference. And if any people clearly deserves what it desires, it is the Korean. The decision to erect a Far Eastern Commission and an Allied Council for Japan is the one most likely to annoy Americans. We believe it to be a simple fact that we, with very useful but not considerable help from Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, won the Japanese war and therefore we are inclined to feel that we have a right to manage the Japanese peace. Certainly many of our top Army and Navy commanders today regard Japan as our western frontier, just as Russia has viewed Eastern Poland and the Baltic countries as her western frontier. We have been conspicuously absent from her management of those relatively modest areas. Why should we tolerate any considerable Russian voice in the management of Japan? In thus arguing Americans are likely to overlook the fact that Japan effectively bottles up Russia's eastern frontier, and that hence she is bound to feel somewhat sensitive as to what goes on there. The Moscow settlement obviously seeks to spare American susceptibilities while at the same time safeguarding Russia's national interest. How it will work is another question. If Russia should decide to play an obstructionist rôle, it will work very badly. If the American Supreme Commander should decide that he is going to be difficult, it will work equally badly. In any case, the major responsibility for day-by-day decisions rests with him, and the working out of the schemes should prove far less difficult than the setup devised for Germany.

Certainly the most hopeful of the seven major subjects of agreement is that relating to control of atomic energy. Here the Russians at least in principle agree to inspection by an international body—an agreement which several of our own politicians freely declared impossible a few weeks ago.

It would be most tragic if the Senate whittles down to any extent this fruit of the Moscow meeting. Of course the obstinate retention of the veto procedure is unhappy, and the atomic energy agreement is only a beginning of what must be done. But at least it is a beginning and not an impasse.

A New Orthodoxy

FROM time to time in these columns we have had occasion to advert to the restoration of the Russian Orthodox Church. News reports of the gradual change from the Soviet anti-religious policy to recognition of the Orthodox Church have been so fragmentary that it has been difficult to reach any definitive conclusion. The realization that once again so many of our fellowmen are enabled to be nourished by sacramental grace has been counterbalanced by fear that religion would become a tool of the Soviet State.

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It is not possible even yet to reach any final conclusion. But present evidence gives ample justification for this fear.

Here are two current news items. The December 26 *Christian Century* reports from Chicago: "A specially called meeting of all American and Canadian prelates of the Russian Orthodox Church ended here today after the bishops voted unanimously not to bow to the authority of the patriarchate of Moscow." In the ten-point statement of Metropolitan Theophilus of San Francisco, head of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in the United States, which "may be understood as representing the position of the prelates who rejected Archbishop Alexei's plea," occurs the following: "Ukase 94 of the Moscow authority must be repealed as regards America. This ukase forbids churchmen to discuss Russian politics." Again, "It is not the intention of the Russian Church in this country to be hostile to the mother church, but the freedom of each citizen of the United States must be recognized." Bishop Dionisije, head of the Serbian Orthodox Church in America, "declared that he is convinced that Alexei's purpose is to replace the present prelates with new ones from Russia and to make the church here an agency for political ends."

An NCWC report of about the same date from Paris states that "in the parts of Poland east of the so-called Curzon line" Russia has decided that "only the Orthodox Church of Moscow will be permitted to function; all other Christian churches must disappear. According to reports from eastern Polish territories which have reached here, no Catholic parish of the Latin rite, no convent, no Latin diocese will exist there after the first of the year. Before long the Latin dioceses of Vilna, Leopoldi, Pinsk and Luck will have become only memories. . . . Particularly desperate is the situation of Catholics of the Armenian and Byzantine rites" which "are under heavy pressure to dissolve their union with Rome and to join the Orthodox Church. The Armenians are staunchly resisting and hope to be treated like Latin rite Catholics, that is, to be sent to Poland. Byzantine rite Catholics, that is the Ukrainians, face the dilemma of either breaking with Rome or suffering martyrdom by arrest, deportation to Asia, forced labor and death. Several Byzantine-rite prelates have already been arrested and deported." The Lithuanian bishops-in-exile (December 1 London *Tablet*) also present a tragic plea in their letter to the Catholic bishops of the world. They tell of the closing of all seminaries, the forbidding of the printing of prayerbooks, catechisms and Catholic periodicals, etc.—even under the first Soviet occupation.

The Soviet Union, in these instances, certainly appears—as does every totalitarian state—to regard religion as an instrument which must either be utilized for political purposes or destroyed. That again raises the question whether a church in the catacombs is not to be preferred to a church which is a political tool. In any case the Soviet Union seems today to be making even greater use of the Orthodox Church than in the days of the most determined Czarist imperialism.

Nineteenth Century Stuff

GENERAL MOTORS has packed up and gone home. It won't play any more until they change the rules. It won't let President Truman's three special fact finders even have a peek at the figures which indicate the company's ability to pay higher wages. GM is adamant in its refusal—as one alert radio commentator put it—at the very time that its profits result almost entirely from sales to the United States Government for war purposes. What better occasion for representatives of the taxpayer to look into General Motors books? But, no matter, GM has left Washington in a childish huff and won't come back unless it can leave its books behind. Can GM get away with it?

Plants may be on strike but the corporation is far from idle. Reaching deep into its pile of war profits it is flooding the papers with full-page ads and propagandizing its stockholders with facsimile reprints. One of its most misleading advertisements is headed "10% more than wartime take-home pay refused by UAW-CIO." Yet the figures of war earnings of $56.93 a week and the GM proposal of $63.44—the only wage figures quoted in the statement—are not figures for take-home pay at all. Other display ads confuse the issue by raising the false analogy of milkmen and haberdashers charging their plushier customers higher prices than the rest. The nature of their furious and costly advertising campaign itself should be enough to show up General Motors.

The complete give-away is the corporation's refusal to let anyone know its ability to pay. But it is right about one thing. Indeed this is "a highly critical issue." The outcome of the dispute will greatly influence the immediate future of American enterprise. Not as GM presents it, with the old red herring of business freedom. Two really vital things are at stake. Big business, if it is to survive in our democracy, must at long last recognize its responsibility and its accountability to the public and it must acknowledge that the maintenance of wages at a level providing widely distributed purchasing power is essential for American prosperity. Americans no longer countenance the rugged individualism GM seeks so desperately to hang on to. Who is fooled, really, by their slickly couched sentiments of self-righteousness?

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"Old and Meager and Ugly..."

A letter from a German woman

DEAR FRIEND: It seems impossible that there is really a letter from you on my desk and that I am writing this answer to your cable. As yet I cannot believe that it is all over, and often I think that I'll never be able to, though certainly I am not one of those who instinctively look for the nearest ditch or hole whenever they hear a plane overhead. But we have all waited too long for release, too often have we anticipated it in our dreams, too often have we fancied that these last years were themselves a dream. As I walked through some destroyed street, I would close my eyes a moment and say to myself, "Now, when I open them again, all will be as it was before; all the people who have died or disappeared will be here again; there will be no Gestapo round the next corner." But I could keep my eyes shut as long as I liked—nothing was changed.

During these last years I was much nearer madness than even my closest friends suspected: at least I hope they did not suspect, but you never can be sure, so indulgent have we become toward each other. Do not think that I have lived through any special atrocities. I have not been in a concentration camp; I have not been buried in any cave; never have I had to run through torrents of flame. What I have experienced has been only commonplace suffering; yet perhaps I should have gone mad indeed had it lasted a month, a week, even a day longer. A few days ago one of my son's teachers, who had been persecuted through all those years but has now been given a very important position in the local government, for no ascertainable reason committed suicide. I think it must have been sheer weariness.

But I have every reason to be grateful. We have survived and we are together and we are not physically hurt and we even still have our old flat all to ourselves. Whether anything remains of my own or my children's property, I do not know, but as yet I really do not care.

Writing you this letter is almost as exciting as our first return home last May. We had walked twenty-five kilometers in torn shoes and then had boarded a tram: you cannot imagine how wonderful a tram is when it spares you eight kilometers of walking. And then our house was still standing and not much more ramshackle than the last time we had seen it. And our flat was empty, with no one moved into it and our furniture all piled together in one room. We fished out a small table and two basket chairs and put them in the empty dining room, full as it was of dust and mortar and broken glass; and I went down to the cellar to fetch the bottle of wine we had bought during the early days of the war in Würzburg, when we had stopped over there for a day in the course of a journey and had eaten grapes in the garden of the bishop's residence (now a ruin) and drunk wine today disappeared from the face of the earth. We had saved that bottle to celebrate the end of the war, though it had often been hard to avoid the temptation of drinking it, and we had often told each other how glad and happy we would be when we could drink it at last. Now we were sitting there in the dining room and could not speak a word, could not even clasp each other's hands. It had all been too much; we all had lost too much. There was that good friend of mine who had stood by me and helped me through all these years. He had lost his only son in France—he never knew how or where the boy died. You remember my nephew? He died in Warsaw in '42. My sister in Norway has been dead since '38, and I am glad of it; she has been spared so much. Her youngest daughter disappeared many years ago; we think she must have joined the underground.

So be patient with me. In a few lines I can tell you where I am geographically and how I am physically, and perhaps I choose to do this at the outset because of the difficulty of writing you at all. But if you want to know what has really become of me in the meantime, you will have to read many long and wearisome letters. When I wrote you the last time in '37, I was indeed sitting at the same desk in the same house; perhaps I was even wearing some of the same clothes as I wear now. During the interval you have certainly had many more experiences than I. At least you have seen a good deal of the world; you know much more about the war than any of us, and much more about Germany—how often I have wished I could talk with you if only for half an hour in order to ask you some of the questions none of us could possibly answer in that vast prison in which we lived. And yet I am no longer the same person; perhaps my yellow hair is the only thing unchanged about me. However it is

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terribly difficult to say in what this change consists. Perhaps we have merely become frightfully old, or perhaps we are childish barbarians once again on the edge of civilization, enjoying the first water running from a tap, for the first time switching on the electric light after weeks with home-made candles, taking the first ride in a broken-down train, spending the first afternoon in a theater—and above all, the lights in the houses shining out into the darkness without any black-out. *That* we longed for almost intolerably all those years.

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There are so many words in our language now which you will not understand; from reading our newspapers, of course, you are acquainted with them, but you don't know what they mean. "Very fine Jabo-weather," "Phosphorcanister," "Kühler-figur." What they mean to us! Of course we are forgetting things. As I pass through the fields along familiar pathways I no longer recall where the shelter ditches are, as certainly I did last year. But often one stops and wonders at one's having forgotten, because those fears still live within us their secret life. Do you know the sensation of having been very cold and of afterwards sitting in a hot bath? It is as though the cold were wriggling under your skin and seeking not to quit you.

How often have I been furious with myself for not having contrived to emigrate before the war! Two summers I spent near the Swiss frontier in Austria during the course of the war, but no opportunity offered to cross over. Perhaps I could have succeeded anyhow had I known what was to come and had I had more courage. Often I quarreled with myself over these things. But it is ridiculous to do so: no one can go back, and I cannot even conceive my having missed the experiences of these years. It may be that I do not wish to.

That, perchance, is sour grapes. For we have not become wiser or cleverer or better or younger; we are old and meager and ugly. We don't know anything of what happened in the world, and we have lost caste by admitting it. We have not even become braver—the very young soldier is always the best. How does it help us morally to know the strange smell of a destroyed house: it is not the smell of decaying plants or corpses, it is not loathsome or even bad, but you will never forget it once you have smelt it, you will never forget the incomprehensible excitement it provides and the dash of satisfaction you feel in destruction and decay and in thoughts on human evil which you think until you become giddy.

Now danger and fear in themselves were only a part of the business. I have myself on occasion been in serious danger, but I don't remember those occasions as having been really bad. I think most people automatically act quite reasonably and remember nothing at all about the worst seconds or fractions of seconds. I recall our returning from a walk early this spring. We had been in the woods and had to come back over a stretch of open field. In those days even single pedestrians often were shot at, but since it was late in the afternoon we had no thought of attack and moved forward together, in a file. Suddenly four planes appeared above us, not over a hundred meters from the ground. We had not even time to fall to the ground but stood stock still. The planes did not fire until they had gone some kilometers further, where a few people were killed.

None of us were really afraid at that moment; we had no time for fear. I do not remember who it was who said that the fear of death is worse than dying itself; I believe it. Then again I recall very well when the panic that so often possessed us during those years invaded me for the first time. It was in the spring of '43, when we were still very careless about going into shelters and we often sat out a raid together in my own room. I had been translating "Kim" aloud for my children from an English copy. We were all of us only half dressed when a bomb fell in the neighborhood. I was not afraid for myself, but grabbed my daughter and pulled her into a doorway. She had been asleep and was so frightened that she threw herself into my arms and cried as I have never heard anybody cry; it was like an animal, and from that day on I also was frightened.

I think it is not our fear but the fear and the suffering of others that is worst of all. My son, for instance, seems to know no fear—I mean, no physical fear. He started manning anti-aircraft guns at the age of fifteen and stood by on some ugly nights. I have seen him reading mathematics or physics in the midst of an assault—he hates soldiering but is a born war reporter. Yet the constant waiting for impending danger was as great a strain upon him as upon me.

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And hope proved just as exhausting as fear. So often had we been disappointed: Italy's defeat, the Twentieth of July. We almost thought hope—at least *fixed* hope—a debauchery. Had I not clung to hope as to a final hope, I should have perished. And thus the years up to Stalingrad were the worst, though they were without personal danger or sorrow for me. They were dull and gray and without reasonable hope. For I could obtain only a very small wireless in wartime, too weak to hear foreign stations. On dark nights during the months of winter, if you were very patient and very skilful, you could sometimes pick up some news from England. So many evenings did I spend with my ear pressed tight to

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the box, in constant fear that the apparatus would squeak too loud! Occasionally I succeeded in tuning in on the Voice from America, and often I thought that maybe I would hear your voice when I did so, but I never did.

Living after this fashion, as though under a lampshade, it was not easy to cling to hope, and often all we had was no temporal hope but only the hope which can never be denied. There were so few people from whom I could ask news or with whom I could talk. For if I had not lived like a snail in its shell, I should never have avoided prosecution. I had systematically to cut short all human relationships: you remember the three little monkeys which are labeled "the secret of happiness"—hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil. Such was the happiness I pursued. Does that seem exaggerated? Surely I could have had friends and acquaintances! But I know myself too well. One day I would have uttered the one word too many, and so many have been ruined by that word. Besides, we were all more or less in the same boat; the absence of mutual trust was even greater than in the years before the war, and I think that I told you then in Switzerland what a "German glance of the eye" means. Only if one happened to meet someone in whom one truly confided could one speak as though with an old friend. (In days long gone by, when a young man made love to a girl, his most intimate question would be, "Have you kissed anyone before me?" But in our times it would be, "Which foreign station would you prefer?") Never shall I forget those very few real talks I had, with the tea-cozy thrown over the telephone!

I recall once going to see J. in Heidelberg (a few days ago he spoke at the reopening of the university) and he said to me, "Of course in the end truth will become visible, yet I think we should pray that it does not become too visible." I am afraid that it has. I could not have endured all those things alone. Yet even friendship and love change as much under the stress as do our other feelings. Whether between friends or between man and wife or mother and son, at last there came silence and it did not seem worth while to speak at all. There were too few things that really mattered; you had to talk about them too often; and him with whom you talked knew them too well. You did not dare complain; your friend had suffered the same things. You could not quarrel because no one was acting or reacting normally; people do not discuss trifles in a hurricane.

★

Later I will send you a more detailed report of our life and you will see that it involved no very sensational events. The worst things I experienced were these: a heavy bomb destroying the roof, doors, windows and some ceilings of our house; an air raid on a train in which I was traveling; and being locked up with my children while a French girl was violated. Most people experienced worse things than these. Our greatest problem, apart from clinging to hope and fighting off despair, consisted in not being able to close one's eyes like the little monkey. It was so very difficult to steer a middle course between being dissolved by pity and growing callous. Very seldom did I weep during all that time except for anger, as I did when Goering gave his hysterical speech during the first days of the war and as I did when Singapore was taken by the Japanese. I did not weep over things directly concerning me. I am at present writing a rather frivolous play, and I composed the best scene in it one evening after Thomas had left to man the anti-aircraft guns for the second time—it is hard to see a young boy go to fight for things which he hates with all his heart.

At the beginning of the war I happened to be staying in the Black Forest. Everyone at the hotel was most excited, and I stayed awake all night and heard the car coming to bring orders for the landlord and various other men to report for duty in the army. Next morning I went for a walk and met a peasant leading a horse which had been commandeered. It was a brown horse, very dark brown, with a lighter mane and tail. I cannot explain why seeing that horse made me weep whereas hearing the men bid farewell to their families did not. We cannot command our hearts as to what shall touch them and what shall not.

In '41 I met a small boy walking through the streets of this town. He seemed a little sickly and pale and wore a pair of cheap spectacles. I looked at him and felt for him, when suddenly I saw that he had a Star of David on his left breast. At the same instant he caught my glance and put his hand up to hide the star. The star was small—they seem to have made them for all ages and sizes—but his hand was likewise small, so that it did not entirely cover the star. By then he had passed by and I never saw him again.

When I returned from the country to the city, acquaintances thought that it would surely be very depressing to live amidst the ruins of the town. But it was not. Sometimes it seems rather ghostly to walk through a quarter where no one now lives. All is so very quiet, and the ground under one's feet is often covered with a fine soft dust, and it is most haunting on a fine bright day, when the sky is clear and dark blue. Yet I did not feel depressed; rather was I intoxicated by the thought that I had survived. It is only now, after some months, that I feel more normally.

Last year we were most depressed about all the cripples from the hospitals we would see in

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the streets. Especially was this true in the small university town with many hospitals near which I was then living. If the town garrison did not happen to have a full complement of soldiers (and more and more seldom was this the case) you hardly ever saw men with two arms and two legs. It seemed quite a luxury when you did. But by now an injury must be particularly nasty to make our flesh creep, as, for instance, a blind man without hands. I saw one a few days ago. There are things to which you do not get accustomed; to others you do. And tell me, what is worse? None of us will come out of these times unstained.

I myself was in the very happy situation of not having to earn my own bread, and for this I had to make very few compromises. But in this it was only a matter of more or less; all of us lived outside of any normal moral laws. One is no martyr but a fool if one contradicts some minor block warden and is hanged in consequence. But it was not the lying, the breaking of oaths, the parting with friends without farewells that were the worst things (though the only picture I had in my room all last spring, having hidden the others for fear of their being plundered, was the denial of Saint Peter). It is the inner corruptions I have talked about which are still worse: the effects of too much fear, too much pity. A topic on which our weekly magazines like to elaborate is the fact of a man's not being able to shed more than a certain number of tears. I think it must be true. Do you remember "Gone with the Wind"? I think it really a great book, while so many other books and works of art which in former years I liked have lost all their appeal. Very often, now, do I sympathize with Scarlett O'Hara.

The Henry James Revival

The expatriate comes home

Paul Rosenfeld

THE LITTLE MAN who had come over from the second-hand bookstore to purchase a few heterogeneous volumes which had lost interest for me sorted the small pile of them with professional lack of enthusiasm. He named a price. Turning to my bookshelves he suddenly inquired, "You wouldn't care to sell those volumes by Henry James, would you?"

I laughed and reminded him, "Some of them came from your own shop! They were flying about on your counters not much over ten years ago. You remember telling me 'He'll never come back'?"

"There's a demand for them now. For books by Henry James, Paul Elmer More, Henry Osborn Taylor. Particularly for Henry James."

A minute later I ventured, "I suppose he's always of interest to special students and hasn't been reprinted since the beginning of the War? Then there are those recent collections of his stories and tales." My reference was to the collection of James's stories about writers and artists which F. O. Matthiessen had edited, and that of his principal short novels edited by Philip Rahv. "Probably they've helped create a new consciousness of him among the younger writers."

"They helped, I guess. There's a real demand. . . ." Going with his package he called back, "Let me know if you decide . . ." and left me with the homely but best possible evidence that the recent revival of interest in the work of Henry James, which the appearance of the scholarly collections had indicated, was not merely a vogue and temporary. People plainly were searching for his work, for odd and forgotten volumes of it. Plainly they had discovered for themselves the gratification which he, specially among novelists, could furnish; and the probability was that the scholarly collections themselves were less a cause than a symptom of this real interest.

Above all he left me the sense of what might be called "the romance" of the attitude of American society toward Henry James. The recent revival merely was the latest phase of an attitude which consistently has been picturesque and wonderful: so diversiform had it been through the years and simultaneously juvenile, wavering and noble. In fact the romance might have served him as the subject of one of his own thoughtfully ironic tales.

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To the year 1890 the attitude of American society had been sympathetic. Few men, to be sure, read his novels. The public of the novel was preponderantly feminine in those days. And it is to be suspected that the public of Henry James, Jr., was composed mainly of women of maturer minds, perhaps maturer years. Yet the

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circulation of fictions by him, such as "Roderick Hudson" and "The American," "The Portrait of a Lady" and "The Princess Casamassima" was wide. Though the author obviously had not been richly blessed with power and rarely thrilled or deeply stirred his readers; though some of these probably were aware of the timidity with which he handled what he knew of passion, obviously he was a realistic, shrewd, worldly-wise observer of life on its more evolved—at least more decorated—levels, and in flight from everything vulgar, and a celebrant of moral fineness. What further counted in his favor was that the valued "habit of polite conversation" triumphed in his style. This was refined in its expressions, exhibiting reactions to small details; witty, accurate, precise, exquisitely differential.

Then in 1890 one of the longer, most original and ambitious of his novels, "The Tragic Muse," fell flat. The majority of readers was baffled and bored by this story of the education of an actress and the tragi-comedy of the life of art in England. The novelist probably found a personal consolation in the fervor with which Henry Harland, the young American editor of the *Yellow Book*—the epoch-making London periodical—in the next years ordered novelettes from him and featured them. Despite this championship the public of James's subsequent fictions became minute. He was read, to be sure, but more talked about than read, and in an attitude of humorous or caustic disparagement. The period of antipathy in fact outlasted his lifetime. Its heyday indeed is distinctly within the memory of many of us who are not old today.

Newspapers continually found a butt for their minor humors in his work; with great good sense associated his novels with all that is willfully obscure, highbrow, raffiné. But the polite themselves were only too ready to smile at the mere mention of his name. No doubt one met persons who confessed to a delight in him: for instance the fair blue-stocking who somewhere during every "literary" conversation managed to announce "No one can expose the *nerves* of a conversation better than Henry James!" And critical lances from time to time were shivered in his behalf, by Huneker and others. The majority of professional critics however seemed agreed that the contemporary James was the effete survivor of the former one. The "Amherst Aristotle," W. C. Brownell, remarked on the decomposition of his values. His style had deteriorated because he dictated rather more than wrote his novels, said W. L. Phelps; because he "wrote with his eye and his mind instead of with his ear," John Macy said, adding that James's American characters were not distinctively Americans. Actually the unfavorable period lasted through 1925. That year there appeared "The Pilgrimage of Henry James," by the distinguished Van Wyck Brooks, whose criticism at the time might have stimulated the thought "that in the United States from time to time they hang some artist *pour encourager les autres*." In his beautiful and damning volume Brooks savagely argued that his "destiny of exile" which had taken him to London, had cost James nothing short of his connection with life.

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Of course he was finicking and a man of limited sympathies. Of course his friendly critics were intolerably superior; had the habit of assuming that to understand him one had to be "a very unusually intelligent person." Of course he preferred living in London and lectured us on our vulgarities. But the real, the responsible event had been this: in "The Tragic Muse" James "the Second" had succeeded James "the First." ("The three periods of Henry James," we are reminded, in the naughty words of Rebecca West, were "James the First, James the Second, and The Old Pretender.") The novelist that is to say had become a special, to all appearances willfully abstruse and niggling, author.

Each James had his own method; and the Second's unprecedented and exacting one boldly ruled out what had been considered the "dramatic" subject, the subject mainly a matter of obvious "action." What remained of "action" and of "drama" almost entirely was mental in nature. The fictions represented moral or emotional revolution. And for his protagonists James now selected types of the human beings who rarely make vividly expressive gestures or perform vividly expressive acts. Really they were types of a special human temperament possibly a mystery to himself: the temperament characterized by the ability to save feelings from discharge, hoard them, thereby to gain time for reflection; for subtle, often serene indicativeness and modifications of attitude. Thus representatives of it are capable both of moral and emotional revolutions and increased responsibility for their behavior. . . . This temperament also is that of the born psychologist. Possessed of the power to struggle against their own primitive feelings, those who share it learn to analyze their own psyches and those of others.

Among these unusual, apparently passive, cold, indifferent protagonists of the second James was a child, Maisie, the precocious, over-stimulated offshoot of irresponsible, divorced parents. Another of them, Lambert Strether was a magazine editor from provincial Massachusetts who had lost his wife and child in early life and in later years become engaged to a wealthy widow. A third was an indolent English journalist named Merton Densher; a fourth, Maggie Verver, a

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young American millionairess married for her money by a Roman prince. James set them in situations which energetically stimulated their habitual hoardings and reenforcement of feeling and their habits of inward dissection: Maisie amid the squalid intrigues of her parents and step-parents; Strether amid the free and esthetic life of Paris, to which his intended had sent him to reclaim her erring son. Densher he set between the woman he loves and the sickly girl whose fortune they both covet; Maggie between her husband and the strong women who menaces her married life. And: boldly opening windows directly on the depths of their conscious existences, he permitted their intricate mental processes to unfold themselves immediately before our eyes.

The scenes surveyed by these personages themselves he moved so to speak to the rear of his stage. The texts meanwhile became filled with beautifully modeled periodic sentences of an intricacy, subtle rhythmicality, polished ceremoniousness without parallel in English literature outside that of the stately seventeenth century. Their aim partly was the representation of the mental play and spring in the dramatis personae, in all its rapidity and complexity; partly the achievement of the tone of culture prized by James, and the creation of delight with clear pictures, with linked metaphors and other ingenious and elegant manipulations of language.

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With this new method of his he began the creation of a body of fiction actually a great complement of that of the naturalistic movement—since 1860 the "modern" movement; a remedy for its defects. Naturalism to be sure had had its victories. Had it not created palpable, visible characters and brought them into unison with their milieux? Had it not also collaborated in the evolution of language initiated by romanticism, and excelled in painting the landscapes of the age and interpreting the people? But it had studied only mediocre persons with success, and proven itself incapable of illuminating the psyche's deeper impulses. Much of its failure was to be attributed to its pedantic style, laboriously imitative of the colloquial language, thus incapable of penetrating surfaces. . . . Voices from all over Europe were saying this: at the very time of the composition of "The Tragic Muse" and after; complaining that naturalism treated only immedicable circumstances and abrupt outbursts of passion. Zola, cried one critic, was "a horse-doctor of the soul." Others were demanding to know in whose name the artist was forbidden to be aristocratic and individualistic; whether the purveyance of finer sensations and perceptions also was not a great ideal? . . . Had the speakers but known it: in London the new art of an American novelist eminently was representing the new ideals for fiction, the practice of finer psychology and expression, passionately demanded by themselves.

James indubitably heard these voices. Still it is our guess that his adoption of his penetrating, analytic, gradually and imperceptibly dramatic second method had largely been involuntary; a consequence of the fact that the temperament of his exceedingly reserved and reflective characters to a pronounced degree was his own. Was he not the son and brother of thinkers, psychologists, philosophers? In exploiting his new method and painting the experiences of reserved and reflective individuals he would only have been representing in his pleasure-giving medium the vivacities, reactions, vibrations of the spirit, of the temperament peculiar to all his flesh and blood. But it was in America that he principally had his chances of an audience, and a large public for such paintings did not exist there. In America as in England the naturalistic movement had not, as on the continent, run its full course. In fact it was destined to produce itself fully in America only about and after the century's turn, in Crane, Norris, Dreiser; and an appetite for complemental expressions like those of James had thus not yet been stimulated. Besides, the persons who shared his temperament and might thus have been gratified by his expression of its reactions were few in number. The reason probably was that the United States was still a youthful community; and the temperament characterized by the ability to analyze, by refined and differential expressiveness and the power to postpone the display of attitudes and thus gain time for reflection, ever is less prevalent not only among women than among men, among children than among adults, but in the more primitive than in the older communities. We have the assurance of students of the human dispositions that this is so.

Yet the unfavorable decades of James's career also were the period of one of the most admirable actions of the American publishing-trade. After the debacle of "The Tragic Muse"—while James in London anxiously turned to play-writing, for which he really had no talent—powerful houses such as Harper and Brothers and Charles Scribner's Sons, at what must have been minimum profit, published the subsequent ever more unpopular work of this thoughtfully perceptive and honest, form-conscious and brilliant American. We suspect the instigating force to have been W. D. Howells. Scribners in publishing the plumcolored New York edition of James's novels and tales, illustrated with the Alvin Langdon Coburn photographs, gave the novelist the opportunity to recobble his earlier writings and furnish the whole of them with delightful technical prefaces. And while there were college-boys who

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raised laughter amid the very gentility of faculty teas by remarking "Henry James has rewritten his work for fear he may not be misunderstood," others were to be found to purchase the edition in preference to the simultaneously offered sets of Kipling and of Stevenson.

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As for the cause of the reward of these loyalties, the latest episode in the relations of American society and Henry James, the current revival: this question cannot but interest us. The present writer feels the cause to have been two obscure events. One is naturalism's completion of its course among us; the other, a proliferation of instances of the temperament which may be suspected to have been pronouncedly his own.

Other factors doubtless have contributed: the many appreciations of his work by English and American writers since his death; and the preparation of the newer public for his elaborate art, by the more popular novelists who, following his new path, made drama out of their characters' consciousness. The experience of the fiction of his esthetic kinsman Proust may also have created a receptivity toward James. Perhaps the revival even was inevitable. The genius of James possessed a trait in common with that of American life, and this common trait might easily make his work eventually attractive to his countrymen. My reference is to their common content of a feeling for form both in the sense of shapely external appearance and of organic structure. James of course constitutes one of the conspicuous cases of solicitude for shapely appearance and organic structure among the novelists. Every bit of his mature work was enclosed by him in tight moulds. Scrupulously he adjusted method and size and density of treatment to the material, arranged it in interdependent parts each of which possessed a special function with respect to the whole. That this feeling for shapely appearance and organization is characteristically American I think requires no proof. Still it is difficult to refrain from remarking that the very career of the novel itself supplies an indication of the Americanism of this feeling. This is, that of the four important novelists conspicuous for intense consciousness of form — Hawthorne, Turgenev, Flaubert and James — two were Americans.

If nonetheless it is the feeling of the present writer that primarily the revival must be attributed to the dissatisfaction with naturalism and the proliferation of the Jamesian temperament, the reason is that some experiences of his own have corroborated his inference. After his conversation with the second-hand bookdealer, reported above, he turned himself into an "inquiring reporter" and asked several recent readers of Henry James what it was that interested and gratified them in his fictions? One of the elicited replies significantly was, "What can you learn about the real nature of people from Steinbeck, and Sinclair Lewis, even from Dreiser?" Another as significantly was "James's characters aren't just simple and instinctive. They make choices; they have power of will and become responsible for themselves." Plainly the speaker was referring to Maisie and Strether: Maisie who after long suspension chooses poverty in preference to comfort in speckled atmospheres; Strether who after long observations decides that the life of freedom and estheticism may be lovely, but since he wants his judgment to be disinterested, refuses it for himself. As plainly his reference was also to Densher and Maggie Verver. For: having lied to the sick girl whose fortune he has hunted, Densher at last refuses to lie further to her, in total indifference to the consequences of his plans. And, finding herself with the power to ruin the stronger woman who is her rival, Maggie with her mind's eye sees feelings of vindictiveness, resentment, passion, "figuring nothing nearer to her experience than a wild eastern caravan, looming into view with crude colors in the sun, fierce pipes in the air, high spears against the sky, all a thrill, a natural joy to mingle with, but turning off short before it reached her and plunging into other defiles."

Still a third telling reply was "It's his style. There is nothing in modern literature to be compared to it for nobility." The speaker plainly had had enough of Bohemian nonchalance! And: since all these elements—psychological penetration, reflective characters, moral revolutions, exquisitely refined, serene and subtle expressiveness, the requisites of James, as has been said, precisely by reason of his temperament—have now become the requisites of a body of readers, it might almost seem unreasonable of us not to conclude that the temperament once his in comparative solitude, abundantly is recurring among us. Other signs certainly also point to this proliferation. Has not American life, plainly, not altogether painlessly, come "of age" in the last decades?

London Commentary

J. L. BENVENISTI

THE MOST important thing that has happened in Britain over the past month is the appearance of a leading article in the *Economist* entitled "The Atom." What the *Economist* has to say here is being said by a great many other people. The significant thing is that the *Economist* says it, for like the *Times*, the *Economist* has something like sacerdotal status.

Now what the *Economist* has to say is simply that there is no future whatever for the human

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race; or, at any rate, that *homo sapiens* "within the lifetime of the present generation" is in imminent danger of being "thrust back nearly to his biological origins" unless all national sovereignty is completely abolished and unless, without reserve or equivocation, a world state is created to supersede it. The *Economist* admits that the very fact that the atom bomb will make the next war far more horrible may bring about a delay of that war, and that consequently "the much-abused balance of power may be the best hope for this generation," but "all historical experience shows that sooner or later the aggressor convinces himself that he has a chance."

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As to the solutions that are now being attempted, such as the proposed handing over of the secret of atomic energy to the Security Council, the creation of an international inspectorate and so on, the paper argues that these things are not only not better than nothing, but a great deal worse than nothing and may do positive harm. They all mean that somebody has got to be trusted who may prove false to his trust. Yet "if the innocent keep their promises while the aggressors break them, war is more likely than if no promises had ever been given."

"It is hardly necessary," says the paper in its concluding paragraph, "to devote any words to proving how impossible the creation of a world state is. . . . Public opinion, it has so often and so rightly been said, would not tolerate it. But perhaps the public, after it has brooded on the atomic bomb for a little longer and has realized how sharp the choice is between the world state and destruction, will change its mind. The only way of knowing is to find out, to ask the people to stand up and be counted. Herewith, for what it is worth, one vote is cast for the world state."

I have quoted this article for several reasons. First, I believe we over here are much more vitally concerned about the terrible possibilities of the atom bomb than you are in America. It affects us more intimately. It may or may not be true that atomic missiles are on the point of being developed which can cross the oceans and demolish the cities of America. But it is quite certain that Britain can be plastered with the things from Europe—and from Russia; and for such a conflict, particularly with Russia, Britain is very unfortunately placed. Russia can withdraw a large part of her industry behind the Urals and disperse her population. We have nowhere into which we can disperse or withdraw, except the Atlantic Ocean. Such considerations are causing the whole question of atomic warfare to occupy a very substantial proportion of our waking life.

Secondly, I am making this quotation because it seems to me that the *Economist,* like so many other eminent people over here, fails somehow to get home on the target. Its approach, like theirs, is a negative one, and a negative approach gets us nowhere. Thus both Mr. Eden, the late Foreign Secretary, and his present successor, Mr. Bevin, made speeches recently in the House of Commons in which they insisted that some mitigation of national sovereignty has become essential. Mr. Bevin even went on to sketch out the idea of a world assembly elected directly by the peoples of the world, and maintained that the law issuing from such a law-making body would be obeyed because it derived directly from humanity as a whole.

This kind of vague talk does not seem to help us much. Mr. Bevin, for instance, did not specify the method by which his assembly was to be elected, and one would really rather like to know just what was in his mind. How will such an assembly, which is to represent mankind as a whole, to be elected? Will every American voter get a hundred votes, as against one vote per Indian and one vote per Chinaman? If so, the net result will be something hardly distinguishable at all from the present United Nations Organization or the League of Nations which preceded it. For it is the power, wealth and importance of the national group that will really count in the world government.

Yet, if some such device is not adopted, the most numerous part of mankind will be the one that determines the character of the government, and this world government of Mr. Bevin's is going to be largely a Russo-Asiatic affair. I can as soon imagine Americans, or the British for that matter, putting up with that as I can envisage them flying off to the moon.

Apart from that, however, the whole conception is, as I have already said, a purely negative one. What is to be the purpose of this world government? Presumably, it is simply to be the prevention of war. Indeed, Mr. Bevin actually said so. He spoke of "a world assembly with a limited objective—the objective of peace." I do not for a moment believe that such a thing will hold a government together. You cannot permanently unite men in a community of funk.

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There is nothing for it except a positive partnership between the nations of the world, based on a reasoned intellectual recognition of some great constructive mutual interest. If that is present, the nations can still remain in existence as administrative units; the community of interest will create its own overriding organs. We shall get the security of peace when that community of interest is so obvious to everybody, when its active pursuit becomes so much a part of our daily lives that war and all preparation for war will become, not so much impossible, as absurd—as absurd and

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intolerable as a state of preparedness on the part of New York against an attack from Pennsylvania.

Yet it is precisely that community of purpose and interest which I am afraid the capitalist order is incapable of producing. There are many criticisms made by the Left of that order, and most of them are false, and of all false criticisms perhaps the most ludicrous is the classic Marxist assertion that wars derive from the clashes of rival capitalist groups in their search for markets. How anyone can say this kind of thing when the world is bristling with great international cartels which are dividing it up in the most friendly and gentlemanly manner, is a little difficult to understand.

False, however, as is the orthodox Marxist doctrine on this point, in one sense it does come nearer to the truth than is generally realized. Wars may not be caused by the clashes of rival capitalists, but they are made possible through the spiritual vacuum which capitalism naturally tends to generate. The atomization of wills which is the very essence of the capitalist system makes it impossible, except in time of war, for the individual to be absorbed into any great collective purpose at all, even when that purpose concerns the purely material ends which the system is held to serve more successfully than any other.

We have before our eyes at the moment a startling, and one may fairly say disastrous, example of this truism. I mean the matter of the proposed American loan to this country. I am told I must be circumspect in what I write about this matter, since if I say anything that is liable to annoy Americans I jeopardize the chances of the loan and our need for that loan is at the moment desperate.

Well, I certainly do not want to suggest what I know to be untrue, namely that the average American is anything but a loyal and kindly person and often a very great-hearted person indeed. But this is a matter not of the heart at all but of the head, and one that touches the fundamental happiness not of Britain alone but of a great part of mankind. Moreover it goes to the very heart of the problem I have just been discussing.

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For the really disturbing thing is the blindness of vast sections of the American public to their own quite ordinary interests and their curiously irrational overestimation of what, I suppose, would be called a "hardboiled" attitude—which I believe most of them find it profoundly distasteful to assume. Thus there is, I understand, actually considerable opposition to granting us a loan at all, and, even if the loan is granted, the conditions at the back both of the loan and the Bretton Woods monetary scheme, which all form part of one big arrangement, are so harsh that (with no benefit whatever to America) we may well risk ruin to accepting them.

Now, Americans are not harsh by nature; they are probably the most kind and generous people on the face of the earth. We are not dealing with any instinctive harshness of character but with a strange intellectual inhibition which seems to result from the peculiar social tradition by which Britain and America live; for the disease affects both countries in equal measure.

For the moment, though your turn will come later, it is we who must pay the price for all this—and a heavy price it is. The abolition of so-called "discriminatory practices" to which we are compelled to subscribe means that we shall probably have to abandon pretty well all bi-lateral trading and so throw away all the advantages that we possess through being the world's largest importers of foodstuffs and raw materials.

It is, of course, perfectly true that when we signed the Lend-Lease Master Agreement, this is broadly speaking what we undertook to do. You are really making no condition now different in principle from that to which we engaged ourselves. We are in honor bound to observe this engagement until you release us, but that makes it neither less cruel nor less futile. Without our trade we cannot live at all and America, with her huge weight of capital behind her, stands a good chance of taking our markets away from us, so leaving us wholly without the wherewithal for the most necessary purchases. To us this may quite literally mean death, for you must recognize that the position of Britain today is a peculiar one. There are forty-six million people living on these little islands in circumstances which, particularly now that the European market has been shot to pieces for the next ten years, make it impossible for them to maintain a reasonable standard of life unless some kind of modest security is given to their back garden, which is their market overseas.

Further, you are making it impossible for us to insulate ourselves against the effects of a world depression. If we could be certain that America would apply to her own internal economy the kind of measures for maintaining employment and purchasing power which we are trying to adopt in our own country, the position would not be so bad, but we are far from having any such certainty. Indeed, we note with alarm that America seems to be accepting the prospect of large-scale unemployment with considerable equanimity, and in a system of world trade or nothing, an American depression will now affect the purchasing power of every market in the world.

What is really behind all this is that America is trying to maximize her export trade and is nevertheless not yet willing to accept the inescap-

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able condition without which this end cannot be achieved; and because she is unwilling to accept that condition, she must inevitably seek such exports as she can, even if it means that others are deprived by such a policy. Yet there is no need for this, and in the long run no benefit to America. There is no getting round the inescapable condition I have named, which is that America should make the rest of the world rich enough to trade with her on terms of something resembling equality. And the only way to do that is by gigantic and continuous exports of capital.

And this is just where the trouble comes. You are not ready to lend, except in very rare and special circumstances, other than on normal business terms. I am not now alluding to the terms of your loan to Britain, but to your general policy. You want repayment and interest from the debtor, even if the interest is only modest; and if you cannot be sure of these things, you will not lend. Proceeding (incorrectly as it happens) on the analogy of private business relations, you think you will lose by such lending.

There is nothing mean spirited or grasping about this at all. It is merely that as yet a quite insufficient number of Americans can see that in the present instance these principles simply do not apply and that it would pay you better to throw several billion dollars in every year into the sea than to pursue such a policy.

America, as things are, will not maintain full employment unless she lends, or even gives to other countries sufficient money to buy her goods. If she does that, she cannot lose. I have pointed out in a previous article that so long as America maintains full employment, the natural increment of her national income will cause that income to rise by something between 2 and 3 billion dollars a year. A mere fraction of this sum will in every year service a loan very nearly equivalent to her entire annual savings—and nobody in the world expects her to lend out as much as that. These are the facts and no competent economist will deny that they are the facts. Indeed the only objection that any professional economist has ever raised to what I say here is that the world is not yet ripe for such a conception.

But what a terrible confession that is! Huge stretches of the earth are hungry for your goods, for the products of your engineering workshops and for your technical equipment and above all for the food which your dollars would enable them to purchase from yourselves and others, the food which would relieve them from the mere struggle for subsistence and enable them to create great capital works of their own. The prosperity which you would thus create would give you markets capable of absorbing and paying for more than you could possibly supply, and would ultimately give you in return an abounding undreamed of prosperity for yourselves. But "the world is not yet ripe for such a conception."

The dreadful part about all this is that it is much more than a matter of economics. For this inability to see anything but the small, immediate, short-term gain, in return for which the far greater long-term gain is forfeited, is the root-weakness of a society organized along individualistic lines, and it is this same weakness which causes our inability to organize for a great collective purpose and with it our inability to eliminate war.

Overcome that weakness, and it lies within America's power at this moment to provide the means by which just such a great collective common purpose could be realized. The raising of the standard of life for mankind as a whole—it need and must be nothing less than that—is a task in which every nation of the world would combine with her, and this act of cooperation would achieve the end which we all now desire with the intensity of despair. Is it really true that the world is not yet ripe for such a conception? America can give the answer.

The Stage & Screen

Hamlet

IT IS somewhat difficult trying to assess the Maurice Evans "Hamlet" in retrospect. Planned, as everyone knows, for military consumption in the Pacific, it should somehow be possible to admire its editing at the same time as one admits to being a consumer of weaker caliber and certainly more attenuated taste. The editing is brilliant, I think, and reasonable: even the graveyard scene does not appear greatly missed. The affair has a little more movement than one is accustomed to expect from Mr. Evans, and with only a small list of extras he has largely avoided the Margaret Webster formula of ad-libbing and jigging supers weaving among the static principals. I thought his casting pretty erratic. Thomas Gomez's King came off not as matter-of-fact, I felt, but rather as plainly dull; Walter Coy's Horatio, while young (a new note) seemed emotionally deficient; Emmett Rogers's Laertes unnotable; and the old business of the discrepancy in age and fellowship between the protagonist and the Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of Howard Morris and Booth Colman here again wrongfully accented. For the star himself, his reading developed as sonorously and exquisitely rhetorical as always. The images sang. Nevertheless, granting this mix-drix of excellencies and deficiencies, I must necessarily say the production struck me as synthetic and partial, certainly mannered. To begin with, the change in period, particularly stressed by the stunning costuming of Irene Sharoff, seemed to me at first provocative, and then sensationally odd. This is, of all things, a "gothic" Hamlet, set and read as such, and consistently

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carried through. Although I am an imperfect student of Mrs. Radcliffe and her school, and have only the most hazy generalizations on tap concerning this style, I think it is only necessary to have read one or two of the Isak Dinesen tales in order to recognize immediately the kind of semi-spring of the work. I would say that this appeared physically the most *Danish* Hamlet I have ever seen or imagined, but this will mean literary Danish, and certainly nineteenth century as its movers concede. Nevertheless, to pursue the "gothic" idea further, one finds the emphasis throughout on scenery, architecture most expertly melodramatically lit; on props; on a kind of macabre air; on all that is horrifying, ghostly, grotesque. And as, philosophically, Mr. Evans has cut to the revengeful rather than the dreaming boy, the readings are in line. Despite its wholesale Elizabethan ending, the tragedy here is a ghost story. The "first modern man" is nowhere on view.

To detail a little: I think to find an Ophelia plucking the "rosemary-rue" scene out of what appears to be a botanical alphabet, a book, is fascinating but certainly fascinatingly tricky. Again, to have the Player King and Queen appear as playing cards is equally fascinating, but certainly over-symbolization. But what is most fascinating of all is that a method designed to simplify the work for one audience (GI) should somehow develop into a decadent conception for another (civilian) one. My total impression of the evening was that it should quite honestly have been entirely played on the player-stage. If the Player King is a playing card, then the real King is *really* a player king, the real Prince a player prince, etc. Of course, if roundly followed, this little scheme would involve two casts, one as audience, and the Player King would, in the end, very possibly be playing solitaire. Or Shakespeare. Certainly in our engineer's (wrighter's) theater all things are possible. In any case, as far as his Hamlets go, I think this one must be called Mr. Evans's curiosity, and should be seen as such. (*At the Columbus Circle.*)

Note

UNAVOIDABLY, in the kind of whirlwind of weathers and microbes stirred by the sudden winter, this department has fallen a little behind the openings and I should like to print apologies to all concerned. In a brief listing, and depending on one trustworthy professional report, I should line the week up something like this. The Gertrude Lawrence "Pygmalion" (at the Barrymore) is rewarding, brilliantly mounted and cast, and marking the first offering of Theatre Incorporated, a repertory theater, an excellent job. The S. N .Behrman "Dunnigan's Daughter" (at the Golden) I thought again formula stuff and important only because of one's regrets for the determined superficiality of the author's thinking. The Feigay-Smith musical of the Terrific Twenties, "Billion Dollar Baby" (at the Alvin) certainly deserves space to itself and I shall try to fit it in next week. In the meantime, while I felt the show was not wholly successful, it is daring as well as enlightened, and I think the most stimulating and talented business on view at present.

KAPPO PHELAN.

Summing Up

NOW is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their movies. And the surprising thing about 1945's list of films is the large number and high quality of its good productions. One hardly has to strain at all to select ten pictures that are not only outstanding but are worthy of a place among any man's group of "bests." A list like this must of course be personal; and, to carry the idiosyncracies of personal choices still further, I don't limit myself to ten; nor do I even arrange the list, except for the first item, in order of preference. Selections like these no doubt tell you as much about me as they do about the state of films. This is no more than right, for knowing what I preferred out of last year's crop, you will be better able to value my enthusiasms about the new films during the coming year. So, without further heckling and more weak apologies, I nominate:

"The Lost Weekend"—as the best film of the year for its excellent use of cinema in telling, with compassion and understanding, the story of an alcoholic.

"A Tree Grows in Brooklyn"—for its glowing remembrance of American things past and its stirring tale of survival even in the poverty of a crowded city.

"The Southerner"—because it employs the camera well to tell an interesting, though rather lop-sided, story of an unhappy farmer who continues to love the soil no matter had badly it treats him.

"The Way Ahead"—because, although released in this country rather late in the game, it is certainly the best statement in movies of the refashioning of unlikely civilians into soldiers.

"Pride of the Marines"—because, without avoiding the real issues, it tells effectively about the return and rehabilitation of one wounded fighter who was without the desire to return.

"The Story of G.I. Joe" and *"They Were Expendable"*—because they are the best of the year's Hollywood products about the war and its fighters, and primarily because they succeed in paying tribute to our servicemen without glorifying war in itself.

"The Last Chance"—because this Swiss film states magnificently and in first-rate theater that all of us live in one world.

"The True Glory," "Fighting Lady," "Battle of San Pietro"—because they are not only the year's best documentaries about war, but they stand with the best of any documentaries and could easily top anyone's list of *the* best films of the year.

"Colonel Blimp"—(and I refer to the original version, not the shortened and distorted movie now going the rounds) because in it the English laugh at themselves and admit their lovable caricature figure is not on his toes in this young man's war.

And finally *"Anchors Aweigh"* and *"Rhapsody in Blue"*—because the former is a delightful musical film bubbling with *joie de vivre,* and the latter, in spite of its juggling and invention of facts, is a moving biography of a great American made exhilarating by the Gershwin score.

The year saw many other films that could be added to

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this list, but one has to draw the line somewhere. We hope that 1946 does as well and better.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Opera Season

Melody as a Menace

NEITHER Gounod's "Roméo et Juliette" nor Ponchielli's "La Gioconda" is an opera ever likely to be regarded as great in any shift of fashion or taste. It is true that to admire Gounod has become vaguely *chic* in some quarters and that his "Faust" is rousing good theater; but this version of Shakespeare remains a sentimental exercise in ingenue difficulties, with duets and a touching final curtain. *Pace* Virgil Thomson, "Roméo" *does* have nice tunes, proving conclusively enough that tunes don't make an opera any more than prose style makes ideas.

"La Gioconda," on the other hand, has just about everything but tunes—burning boats, lurking villains, drugs, distant church services, ballets, etc., etc.—and yet it made a far more substantial evening, especially with Milanov and Pinza, than "Roméo" did. It is possible to refine musical drama in a vulgarly emotional atmosphere dominated by brawls and bravura, but an atmosphere dominated by refinement can only, after a time, end in a *épuisé* vulgarity gratuitously ascribing tunes to emotions. Italian opera learned, as it refined, to say at least two things at once; but as French opera went on it eliminated ambiguity in the name of a classicism it evidently did not understand. Ponchielli is more a descendant of Mozart than Gounod is of Gluck.

However, where a Verdi might have created greatness, Ponchielli only creates effects, and yet these effects are just what "Roméo" most lacks. How one yearns for a good loud ensemble with the Capulets and the Montagues fighting and a host of characters emoting stage center, instead of *l'amour toujours l'amour.* Minor works show their tradition most clearly.

Yet it is a shame that the great French operatic school of the beginning of the nineteenth century remains completely unrepresented on the Metropolitan stage. Revivals of "Les Huguenots" or "Les Deux Journées," for example, would make welcome additions to the New York season.

CHESTER KALLMAN.

Books of the Week

Teresa: Her Demon Lover. Austin K. Gray. Scribner. $3.50.

OSTENSIBLY here is a book about a libertine and his last liaison. Actually it is the life of a romantic girl, good, gentle and devoted, and the story of how she domesticated a bitter, bored, brilliant young man and turned him from a conceited fop into a grown-up person who, though not a hero, was, at least in his death, heroic. Mr. Gray has done a superb job. To discover a new slant on Byron, to write a scholarly, careful book that smells not of the lamp but of April violets, is no small feat. And, when his canvas is full of great names—Byron, Shelley, Trelawney, Leigh, Hunt, the Blessingtons, Caroline of Wales, Fox (Henry, of course) Louis

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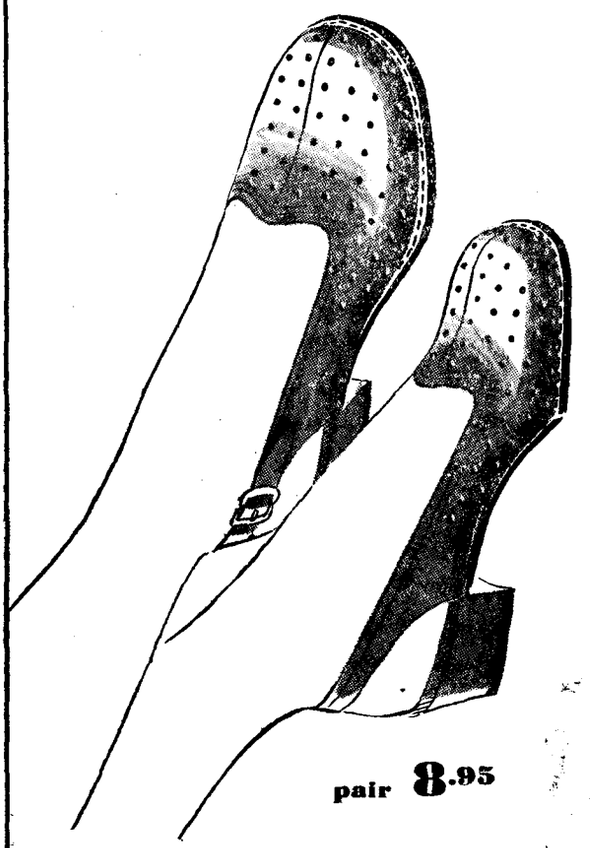

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Napoleon, Lamartine—to keep a red-haired young woman, ill-educated, innocent and very, very much of a lady, as the central figure, and to make his readers feel how her warmth, her simplicity, her dignity and her gaiety made everyone who came near her the nicer, is a remarkable piece of stage-management and of production.

What a movie this book would make! The wicked, venal old husband, Count Guiccioli, the child-bride, the carriages with the six black horses, the pompous palaces! The bride's family, poor, jolly, living like country squires round Ravenna; the stiff parties: the Torlonia ball, the reception given by the Marchese Cavalli for his niece and her *cicisbeo,* her cavalier, when Byron "was obliged to put on knee-breeches, silk stockings and a brocaded coat, to gird on an old sword and carry a cocked hat in his hand. Thus uncomfortably arrayed he took Teresa under his arm and together they paraded, bowing and smirking like royalty, among the guests!" And the pathos—Allegra's death; Mrs. Shelley calling on Teresa, and the finding of Shelley's body. Byron's departure for Greece. And the humor: the horrible Hunt children swarming over the rented palace in Pisa, the Marquis de Boissy introducing his wife to Louis Philippe as "Madame la Marquise de Boissy, Sire, my wife and formerly the mistress of Lord Byron!" More than "Mayerling," because the characters are so much more; more than "Disraeli," because they are young and very beautiful: here is the scenario for the most romantic, the most enchanting of all historical films. Certainly, in his four years with Teresa, Byron produced the best of his verse. "The Prophecy of Dante," "Cain," "Heaven and Earth," the "Vision of Judgment," "Sardanapalus," most of "Don Juan"—it is these the twentieth century prefers to the dated "Childe Harold" that made Byron's fame and ruined his morals.

And, if only he had lived, what a Catholic he would have made—the greatest English Catholic poet since Chaucer. For Mr. Gray's study leaves no doubt that Byron was feeling his way toward the Church. Aurora Raby, Don Juan's Newstead Abbey love, who was young, was a Catholic, and seems Byron's most lasting tribute to Teresa:

> sincere, austere
> As far as her own gentle heart allowed.
> She gazed upon a world she scarcely knew
> As seeking not to know it; silent, lone
> As grows a flower, thus quietly she grew
> And kept her heart serene within its zone.
> There was awe in the homage that she drew
> Her spirit seemed as seated on a throne
> Apart from the surrounding world and strong
> In its own strength—most strange in one so young.

And in discussion with the odious Shelley, Byron "tactfully closed the argument on Teresa's side: 'after all . . . common sense is the best philosophy, and God Himself the first of miracles.'" Laugh as he might, fret and chafe as he did at the conventions of Italian society, Byron accepted them, accepted Teresa's ordered universe, where, if you sinned, you said you were sorry and did not make a system of your sin. Byron's cynicism about women did them—and him—far less harm than Shelley's idealism, as Mr. Gray comments in a brilliant half-page.

Teresa not by preaching but by practice taught Byron, in spite of her own folly and frailty, something of what the sacrament of marriage meant, and of what the family was. And, in learning a little of natural law, he began to perceive, dimly, the outline of a supernatural. Teresa was too kind to Shelley: in her verses written after visiting his grave, she saw his world "bathed in light infinite beyond all power of words"; unaware of Harriet Westbrook at the bottom of the Serpentine—or of all the other pitiful relics of a prig. But of Byron the cynic and the sinner she might have made, could she but have married him, something of a saint. Her brother Pietro at least led him to a death which was inspired by heroism and has inspired it. In the Church, that has pity for human passion but none for human pride, Byron could have developed, could have added immensely to his stature both as poet and as human being. His last words, "I am leaving something dear behind me in the world"—spoken in Italian, might, as Mr. Gray suggests, have referred to his friends, his daughter, his own memory, or—as Mr. Gray does not suggest—to Teresa and to her brother and to the ambiance in which they lived. For they were as near security and affection and peace as the Pilgrim of Eternity came to in this world.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

Modern German Literature, 1870-1940. *Victor Lange. Cornell.* **$2.50.**

THIS beautifully printed book is intended to "supply a critical outline of German literature between 1870 and the present . . : especially to those who are not familiar with that literature's recent history and who do not read the originals with ease." With these aims an occasional over simplification has been inevitable and of course completeness can't be expected. But I find it strange that a key figure like the great poet Albert Mombert should have been overlooked, who, according to Moeller van den Bruck, initiates a period in German lyricism and is in any case one of the most impressive poets of modern German literature. There is also a certain incongruity of treatment: the poets between 1870 and 1900 are summed up in a very hasty way, while the author's emphasis is on the writers of the last decades. Lange stresses the sociological background of the German writers and "their apocalyptic sense of crisis" without which neither the generation before nor that after the First World War can be fully understood. But also this background is treated in a somewhat onesided way: while the author gives a good description of the disillusionment and the proletarisation of the German bourgeoisie and of the proletarian desire for political action, he gives little thought to the religious renaissance before the First World War and to the German "youth movement." Even the allegedly "excellent minor figures" of the Catholic poets and essayists are only mentioned by names and dates without any individual appreciation.

The bibliography constitutes a third of the whole book and is to my judgment its most valuable part. It lists more fully than any other publication the translated works of the poets mentioned in the text, from the eighteen seventies until now. General studies as well as critical and biographical articles from magazines of all kinds are cited—a great help for all students working in this field. Not less valuable for practical use is the careful index, including not only all German names and titles mentioned in the text but also the titles of all available English translations, with the original titles in parenthesis. These features make Professor Lange's book a very useful work of reference.

MAX FISCHER.

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The Diaries of Tchaikovsky. Translated by Wladimir Lakond. Norton. $4.00.

IT IS perhaps a dissonance, at best a variation, that a justly famed writer in another field has now summed up Tchaikovsky as "one of the best composers of the second order," and one we must consider "our friend" because he "wrote the most beautiful ballet music in the world" and "detested Brahms." The same reviewer called Wagner and Verdi great contemporaries of Tchaikovsky. Does he include these two greats in the first order and omit Brahms? A wonderful opera-goer-balletomane view of the art of musical composition! Would the generally accepted positions of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven be perfectly safe in this sort of "order?" Where would he accommodate Palestrina, Gluck, Haydn, Mendelssohn? Let me risk a guess that one who leaves a comment like this to wither in the moonlight doesn't know Tchaikovsky and doesn't know Brahms. Goethe said, "A man doesn't learn to understand anything unless he loves it."

There is considerable evidence that Tchaikovsky had profound respect for Brahms, also his contemporary. In reading much of what has appeared in this country about P.I.T., I remember only one or two annoyed references of his to Brahms's works. There was probably a natural, if paradoxical, antipathy-admiration between the two composers toward each other's finished product. Such a split opinion is not uncommon between friends, even husbands and wives, when each offers the other a virtue, a strength of character, obviously helpful and yet annoying in its very attraction. The Russian's method was to invent a musical idea and then develop it to most of its ultimate modes of statement and climaxes. The German presented seemingly endless successions of ideas, each more expressive in its implications than in actual statement. The two were largely complementary. It is quite significant that Tchaikovsky said he was flattered by Brahms's staying over a full day on a visit to Berlin so that he might attend the rehearsal for the first performance in Germany of the Fifth Symphony and have lunch with its composer. Brahms told Tchaikovsky that he liked all of the symphony but the last movement.

To glance at another 1945 opinion, I, for one other, have been deeply moved by only five composers, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, Brahms, Tchaikovsky. And composers are great only in so far as one follows other people's standards or one's own heart and head. No, I haven't forgotten Beethoven, but how much more austere a moving is his! How he tells us, whereas the others are willing to persuade!

I once knew a managing editor who preferred not to review a biography of Tchaikovsky because some high school students might be shocked to find that there is such a phenomenon as homosexuality. Without denying the possibility of shock in such circumstances, I would timidly suggest that high school is high time to have been wisely instructed about the more apparent pitfalls of human existence. It is hardly for me to assess the question of guilt in the varying degrees of this abnormality, but Tchaikovsky was certainly no villain. Extremely sensitive, he yet found healthy pleasure in the constant companionship of many relatives and friends. Crippled on one side of his emotions, he specifically termed that his "cross." He was considered by almost all who knew him to be one of the most courteous and charitable of men.

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His diaries are not at all the tortured expressions of a De Quincey or a Poe, as some have thought him. Essentially clear-minded, simple in most of his ways, he set down in his journals a record of his days' experiences (1873-1891—he lived from 1840 to 1893) and a frank but rather naïvely written discussion of his thinking. The account of the trip to New York, Niagara Falls, Baltimore, Washington and Philadelphia, in the spring of 1891, is a miniature revelation of the man and genius. Others have written more penetrating autobiography, but has any writer of words of the 1940's anything to equal in artistic expression the Nutcracker Suite, Romeo and Juliette, the Piano and Violin Concertos, the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Symphonies?

JOHN BRUBAKER.

Korea and the Old Orders in Eastern Asia. M. Frederick Nelson. Louisiana. $3.75.

THIS IS a remarkable book. It is the first recent American study to put Korea where it belongs in its importance to the Far Eastern scheme of things. By analyzing the nature of Far Eastern state relations, Mr. Nelson has also shown the deep discrepancy of our own relations with them, which has done so much to produce the wreckage of world war. He has pointed the way to the basis of peace in the Far East. By doing so he has made obsolete the very large number of treatises on our American Asiatic foreign policy which have always been so deeply unsatisfactory to a critical reviewer of their product who does not exactly know how to express what is wrong.

Lieutenant (j.g.) Nelson, USNR and Ph.D., has been attached to the Military Government Section, Chief of Naval Operations. An Iowan, he was graduated, majoring in law, government and economics, from Mississippi State College, from Duke University in North Carolina (international law and relations with special reference to the Far East) and became assistant professor in the department of history and government in Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College. He is that rare type of research student who grasps the principle of what he reads rather than merely adding to the accumulations. Dr. Nelson gives, in this study, the best record to date of Korea's foreign relations. In doing so, he makes a unique contribution by demonstrating that "Korea offers a complete picture of the transition of an Asiatic area through several international orders. In her relation to China, Korea stood as a perfect example of membership in an international system which shaped Far Eastern affairs for centuries." "Before considering a system for the preservation of peace in the Far East following the overthrow of Japan's 'new order in Eastern Asia,' there should be a thorough understanding of the orders which existed prior to Japan's aggressive rise to power."

Dr. Nelson emphasizes the fact of Far Eastern unity which has been cited so frequently in the pages of THE COMMONWEAL, but does it more convincingly, because more scientifically than anyone else has. These old orders are the international societies of Confucian monarchies. Confucius (551-478 B.C.) impressed his writings so deeply on all the Far East that a complete philosophy of civilization, a complete thought structure resulted. "According to the Confucian theory, the world is a single unit, national in organization, with a set of hierarchical relationships ascending from the lowest man up to Heaven itself. Heaven is viewed as the source and the ancestor

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of all things. . . . To them (the Chinese) it is rather a presiding spirit or principle which is fundamentally moral in its nature and, therefore, analagous to Western concepts of fate, or Providence. . . ." Korea (a country rich in "age, culture and national tradition") has been deeply and permanently moulded in this "non-legal, familistic" Confucian order, which is the very antithesis of our Western legalistic basis of international relations. Japan, equally deeply affected by it, has never wholly accepted it. In Japan it remained the possession of a relatively restricted élite in literature and religion or ethics during the centuries corresponding to the first centuries of the Christian era, while among the Chinese and Koreans following the Confucian philosophy and code of ethics for centuries, their diffusion among *all* their people had become so general as to constitute the mores of the people. To Dr. Nelson, examining both this kind of international structure and the state structure of Western Europe (using Korea for the purpose) "her past throws light on a broader and perhaps fundamental problem: the nature of state systems themselves," and the phenomena they contain which have caused such writers as F. L. Schuman to observe: "Among the artifacts of Western man which seem destined to disappear . . . is the whole system of international relations which has hitherto prevailed in the Western World." ("Europe on the Eve," New York, 1939.) Before the evolution of intense nationalism, Christendom supplied unity in the West. Before the overwhelming impact of this new nationalism upon the Far East, Confucianism supplied a unity analagous to that of Christendom. The very deep split between the newer "legalism" and intense nationalism of the West and the older "non-legal, familistic" order of Eastern Asia has made it practically impossible for the two areas to understand each other, particularly when both have become inextricably confused.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

The New Veteran. Charles G. Bolte. Reynal. $2.00.

THE NEW VETERAN, like his dad before him, is returning from the wars—and joining the American Legion. The Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars between them have already enrolled millions of discharged servicemen. The eighty-odd new veterans' organizations, on the other hand, are all in various stages of organizational disarray. Of them, the best is the American Veterans Committee, of which Charles Bolte is the head. Democratic in composition and forward-looking in approach, AVC epitomizes the aspirations of our young American manhood for a better America, at peace with the rest of the world. Yet, despite its worthy goals and the dynamism of its leader, it is today a minuscule, struggling organization, with disheartening prospects for real growth.

Bolte in this book establishes a sound ideological base for a progressive movement among the veterans of this war. He shows, further, that this is not possible within the framework of the American Legion (or VFW). The Legion is a rich and powerful bureaucratic machine, committed four-square to a point of view which is antipathetic to that of the "new" veteran. It is fundamentally a pressure group which seeks financial and economic advantages for the veteran *as a veteran,* and not as a citizen in a democratic, "full-employment" and spiritually healthy United States. There is no compromise, no possibility of

This Publishing Business

GOD AND THE ATOM

The Atom Bomb has, by the fact of its use, raised a vast moral question in a way that man's conscience finds it difficult to sidestep. In the ordinary way conscience's first reactions are its keenest, and it soon quiets down. But with the Bomb it is different—even if we were impatient at the time with any questioning of a deed which brought so spectacular a victory—questioning will not die down but only bothers us the more.

Yet deeper even than the moral problem raised by its use, we are beginning to realize that its mere existence—the unlocking of the incredible might locked up in a thing too small to be seen by any microscope—brings us into a new era in which all the problems of religion must be looked at again; for in this new world, neither religion nor anything else looks the same.

It is always so. Every discovery that has revolutionized man's picture of the universe has had a troubling impact upon his religion. So it was when astronomy discovered that the earth was not the center of the universe, and again when geology started the theorists on the road of evolution, and again when psychology told us of the subliminal self: now it is the turn of physics. And if there is one thing that the believer should have learned, it is the folly of just letting the impact happen, instead of proceeding at once to bring what science has discovered about the universe into fruitful relation with what religion knows of God, especially His Omnipotence, His Wisdom and His Love.

So Monsignor Knox has seen. For the first time since he began his monumental work of translating Scripture, he has interrupted it—to write this book. He analyzes the shock brilliantly. For minds which have never grasped the depths of religion, there is a tendency to think that the Atom is so near to infinite in power (and man so near to infinite in power now that he can use it) that God is less necessary than ever. For the religious mind there is a problem of re-seeing the universe; faith has readjustments to make at a deeper level, and not only faith, but hope too, which is the key to vitality, and charity, more obviously needed than ever if this terrifying power now in man's hand is not to be used for the destruction of the world.

All this is discussed by Monsignor Knox at once profoundly and simply and with that lucidity which is the very heart of wit. [—F. J. S.]

GOD AND THE ATOM, by Ronald Knox. $2.00

In answer to a number of inquiries, we should like to say that THEOLOGY AND SANITY, by F. J. Sheed, is due for publication early in the Fall.

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Next Week

WAR AND THE POET, by W. H. Auden, utilizes a current anthology of a similar title as a springboard for discussing whatever relationship there is, or should be, between poetry and the war experience. Mr. Auden's suggestions should be of unusual interest to those who are wondering about the caliber of the verse which came out of World War II.

A NOTE ON MUSSOLINI, by Joseph T. Durkin, S.J. of Georgetown University, asserts that the rise to power of Italian Fascism followed directly the regular political pattern of modern Italy. Father Durkin sees in Mussolini, then, primarily one more in a long line of virtual Italian dictators rather than a man who led a revolution. He makes it a thesis well worth examining.

PRESCRIPTION FOR DEMOCRACY, by Edward Skillin, Jr., deals with a comparatively new American phenomenon, the People's Organization. This first came into prominence with the Back-of-the-Yards Neighborhood Councils in Chicago and has spread to other cities. Its prime mover, Saul Alinsky, publishes his manifesto January 14.

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a meeting of the minds—the veterans of World War II must decide between two enemy camps. To readers of this magazine, the choice would seem clear. That for the ex-GI it is not so clear is understandable. The cohesive, democratic credos which forged a successful military machine out of a motley horde of civilians no longer have appeal. In Normandy and Okinawa, Joe knew (though he could not express it) that he was fighting to rid the world of something evil and retrogressive. With V-J Day, the enemy has lost concreteness. Joe has returned to claim his right to enact his jungle dreams of Mom and blueberry pie; he is still busily engaged in savoring both. True, his happiness at the reunion with Mom has been somewhat blurred because Joe's old job is no longer open to him. And discussions on the atomic bomb, the current strikes, the rat-at-at of machine guns in Indonesia and Palestine don't go hand in hand with blueberry pie. But—to put it another way—the full impact of a world in travail, of an on-rushing moral chaos in our civilization, has not quite struck home. It is easier for Joe to step up to the sumptuous bar of his local Legion Post there to trade reminiscences of Anzio and Tarawa for those of the Argonne and Chateau Thierry. It is far easier to spend an evening discussing the bonus legislation which his Legion Lobby is plumping for than, say, the Murray-Wagner-Dingle Bill or a real understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The time is coming—and faster than he knows—when Joe will have to make a clearer choice between the Legions and the AVC. In that choice our society has a great stake. For—and let us not mistake it—America for many years is going to be profoundly influenced by our new veterans. Having determined the course of the war, they are destined, willy-nilly, to play a big rôle in determining the course of a world presently at peace.

HARVEY J. BRESLER.

Beautiful Austria—Calendar for 1946. *Auxiliary Committee of the American Relief to Austria.* (10 *East* 43 *Street, New York* 17, *N. Y.*) $2.00.

HERE IS a calendar, with ample space in which to inscribe daily memoranda, that cannot fail to give you delight because of its charming photographs of a country which specialized in charm. Salzburg, the Alps, Vienna, Innsbruck all nostalgically remind us of the most gracious form ever assumed by German culture, something now grievously stricken but not utterly dead. By buying this calendar you can help revive it. Many of the monuments here shown have been spared, and no one has yet destroyed the Alps.

CONTRIBUTORS

THE AUTHOR of the letter from Germany is a person of moderate means who has spent her life in university circles.
Paul ROSENFELD is a New York critic, novelist and essayist who has written extensively on music and on contemporary French literature. His criticism appears in the *American Mercury*, the *New Republic*, etc.
J. L. BENVENISTI is an English publicist and author who continues his comments on events from a British point of view.
Chester KALLMAN is a New York music critic.
Anne FREMANTLE is an English writer at present living in New York.
Max FISCHER contributes extensively to the German American press and was a journalist in Germany before coming to this country more than ten years ago.
William Franklin SANDS, formerly in the American diplomatic service, now resides in Washington, D. C.
Harvey J. BRESLER is a New York lawyer who has contributed articles and book reviews to such publications as the *American Historical Review* and the *Survey Graphic*.

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